

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8907

C O N F I D E N T I A L PANAMA 5943

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PN

SUBJECT: ROSENBAUM CASE: CHRONOLOGY

REF: WAGNER-MAY TELECON OF AUGUST 26

1. AMBASSADOR HAS HANDLED EFFORTS HERE TO ACHIEVE A SOLUTION TO THIS CASE. A CHRONOLOGY OF HIS ACTIONS FOLLOWS.

2. FALL, 1975: AMBASSADOR DISCUSSED THE CASE AT SOME LENGTH WITH AMB. NICOLAS GONZALEZ-REVILLA. HIS UNDERSTANDING WAS THAT THE GOP HAD MADE AN EX GRATIA PAYMENT OF \$10,000 TO DR. ROSENBAUM. LATTER TOLD HIS LAWYER, HOWEVER, THAT THE PAYMENT WAS INADEQUATE AND INDICATED THAT IT WAS EVIDENCE OF PANAMANIAN "RESPONSIBILITY". THIS RESPONSE IRRITATED THE PANAMANIAN AND THEY DECIDED THAT NO FURTHER PAYMENTS WOULD BE MADE.

3. DECEMBER 1975: AMBASSADOR SPOKE WITH PRESIDENT LAKAS ABOUT THE CASE AND EXPLAINED IT TO HIM IN DETAIL. HE NOTED THAT FAILURE TO MAKE SOME SORT OF SETTLEMENT MORE ADEQUATE TO COSTS INCURRED BY ROSENBAUMS COULD PRODUCE ADVERSE PUBLICITY AND DO DAMAGE TO PANAMA'S IMAGE IN WASHINGTON AND ESPECIALLY IN THE CONGRESS AT A TIME WHEN SHE DID NOT NEED THAT IMPACT AT ALL. THE PRESIDENT SAID HE WOULD LOOK INTO THE MATTER.

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RM IN APRIL 1976 THE AMBASSADOR SPOKE TO THE PRESIDENT AGAIN ON THE CASE. LAKAS STATED THAT DUE TO CONSIDERATIONS OF DIPLOMATIC IMMUNITY PANAMA WAS NOT OBLIGED TO MAKE A SETTLEMENT, BUT THAT AS A GESTURE OF GOOD WILL SOME PAYMENT WAS IN ORDER. THE PRESIDENT SAID THAT HE WOULD UNDERTAKE TO PROVIDE \$50,000 WHICH COULD BE PASSED TO THE ROSENBAUMS. SHORTLY AFTER THAT CONVERSATION, HOWEVER, THE "TUNA BOAT CRISIS" AROSE, AND THE AMBASSADOR DECIDED TO WAIT UNTIL A MORE PROPITIOUS MOMENT TO PURSUE THE MATTER, RATHER THAN RAISE IT THEN GET A REJECTION.

5. THERE HAS NOT BEEN SUCH A MOMENT SINCE THAT TIME, BUT THE AMBASSADOR WILL AT THE EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY RAISE THE CASE AGAIN WITH THE PRESIDENT.

JORDEN

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